

58CSR73 Reptile and Amphibian Rule

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: May I still capture and photograph amphibians and reptiles in West Virginia?

A: Capture and temporary possession of most native West Virginia reptile and amphibian species for the purpose of photography or in-hand identification is acceptable so long as the animal is handled for the minimum time necessary to photograph or identify, not transported from the site of capture, and released unharmed.

Q: May I flip rocks, turn logs, or manipulate natural habitat to search for native reptiles and amphibians on public land?

A: If natural habitat is to be manipulated to search for reptiles and amphibians on public lands (i.e. rock flipping, log turning, etc.), permission from the appropriate land managing agency or organization is required.

Q: Why do we have reptile and amphibian regulations?

A: Regulations are in place for all wildlife to provide basic protections to ensure sustainable populations for all West Virginians to enjoy. Reptile and amphibian regulations are specifically used to provide needed, basic protections for these vulnerable taxa and reduce the risk of collection, persecution, and spread of wildlife disease.

Q: If I had a captive native reptile or amphibian species prior to March 23, 2021, am I still able to keep it as a pet?

A: Yes—Individuals that legally had captive native reptiles and amphibians prior to the updated rule may continue to remain in compliance with the rule by completing and submitting a verification form to the WVDNR by March 31, 2022, and receiving an authorization letter to cover possession of the animal for the remainder of its life. Individuals in possession of green frogs (*Lithobates clamitans*) or American bullfrogs (*Lithobates catesbeianus*) must only possess a valid fishing license to maintain possession of these species and do NOT require submission of a verification form.

Q: Where can I find the verification form and how long do I have to submit?

A: The verification form can be found by visiting <http://www.wvdnr.gov/herpregs/herpregs.shtm> and must be submitted by March 31, 2022. Individuals may submit the form through WVDNR's online system or e-mail their completed forms to dnrreportaherp@wv.gov. Individuals may also print a form, or receive a printed form from any WVDNR District Office, and submit by mail to:

Reptile and Amphibian Rule
West Virginia Division of Natural Resources
Elkins Operations Center
738 Ward Road, P.O. Box 67
Elkins, WV 26241

Q: Do I need to submit a verification form for captive exotic reptile and amphibian species?

A: No—58CSR73 only pertains to native species of reptiles and amphibians and does not interfere with an individual's ability to own exotic reptile or amphibian species.

Q: Do I need to submit a verification form for my non-wild type coloration red cornsnake (ex. Amelanistic, Anerythristic, etc.)?

A: No—58CSR73 pertains to wild-type colorations only. Only red cornsnakes (*Pantherophis guttatus*), and other native species exhibiting normal, wild-type coloration will require submission of a verification form to remain in compliance with the updated rule. All colorations of species native to West Virginia are still subject to rules pertaining to the sale of wildlife as described in §20-2-11. Sale of wildlife.

Q: Do I need to submit a verification form if I am a researcher or educator wishing to collect reptiles or amphibians for these purposes?

A: Educators that legally had native species in their possession prior to March 23, 2021 will need to submit a verification form for those animals. Researchers and educators wishing to collect reptiles or amphibians on or after March 23, 2021 for the purpose of scientific research, education, or outreach must submit a [Scientific Collection Permit](#) application, NOT a verification form.